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Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

Comrade Tandy's book, "Voluntary Socialism," can be had in Great Britain of William Gilmour, 26 St. Clair St., Glasgow, Scotland.

Anarchistic Communism, according to all signs and testimony, is dead in France—as dead as it is in England and in this country. In French revolutionary circles collectivism rules the day. The Communists wil have to choose between going over to State Socialism, which they profess to detest, and joining the individualist Anarchists. A few years ago Communism was in a flourishing condition, and seemed to be growing apace, so that Comrade Robinson and others were somewhat alarmed, and earnestly sought to draw useful lessons from the situation for the benefit of the Anarchistic movement. The emphatic lesson of the present situation is that an illogical thing, a thing of shreds and patches, can have only an ephemeral success, and is doomed to sink by its own weight of absurdity. The few Communists who really want freedom will get it by coöperating with the individualists, and, after freedom shall have been won, nobody will object to their undertaking experiments in voluntary Communism.

The "late unpleasantness," it seems, has not settled the secession question as finally and irrevocably as our patriotic historians and philosophers have supposed. The talk of the rabid silverites in the west about the possibility of the secession of the western States is extremely significant. It is not alone that a few agitators dare to make such threats, but also that the entire press of the country, daily and monthly, finds the matter important enough to discuss seriously, and endeavors to elicit expressions of opinion in regard thereto from leading men. Of course the "great statesmen" pooh-pooh the suggestion of secession, but that fact is discounted in advance by all who understand that these gentry never really lead public opinion. As times are bound to become worse and worse, and as the eastern financial policy is bound to excite the resentment and hostility of the farming sentiment more and more, it is highly probable that secession talk will become very general and lively in the west. Western secession would be more serious than southern secession. There is no slavery question to obscure and complicate the fundamental issue, and the cry of patriotism would lose much of its magic under the new conditions, when plutocracy is arrayed agaist the masses. All the humanitarian and patriotic emotions would be enlisted against the principle of unionism rather than for it.

A workman recovered damages against a trade union in an Indiana court for bringing about his discharge by ordering a strike and refusing to return to work until he had been dismissed. The judge held that such a way of depriving a man of his job was plainly wrongful. Now the court of appeals overrules this decision, and declares that the union men had a perfect right to strike. The court says: "Each one could have quit without incurring any civil liability to him. What each one could rightfully do certainly all could do if they so desired, especially when their concerted action was taken peaceably, without any threats, violence, or attempts at intimidation. There is no law to compel one man or any body of men to work for or with another who is personally obnoxious to them. If they cannot be by law compelled to work, I am wholly unable to see how they can incur any personal liability by simply ceasing to do that which they have not agreed to do, and for the performance of which they are under no obligation whatever." This is surprisingly sound from an American court, but would it have the logic to apply the same reasoning to a case of boycotting? Would it hold that all could do in concert what each could rightfully do separately? Probably not, although there is absolutely no reason for the current distinctions between strikes and boycotts undertaken by combinations.

The Prohibition party is on the road to disintegration. The split which followed the triumph of the narrow gaugers, who are against identifying the party with any other course than abolition of the liberty to sell and drink intoxicants, has weakened both wings, and neither will be formidable hereafter. The fanatics were strong in the convention, but they will find that few voters will consent to ignore the financial and industrial issues entering into the present campaign. The most intemperate Prohibitionist knows that hard times are not caused by drink, and that a prohibitory law will not prevent monetary panics or crises. He knows that the money question must be solved, that the tariff must be settled, and that every other great question must be taken up and disposed of. A party that has nothing to say on the greatest problems of the day is a ghost, a "has been," and has lost the power of attracting new elements. On the other hand, the broad gaugers, who claim to have views on all current issues, tacitly admit that Prohibition is a small matter, one of a large number of "reforms" which the country needs. To gain one's support, they have, therefore, to convert him, not merely to Prohibition, but to every other view or proposal embodied in their platform. This naturally reduces the number of conversions, and retards growth. The fact is, Prohibition is dying; it is one of the unfit which cannot survive under the changed political conditions. As long as people could be persuaded that everything was well except the liquor traffic, Prohibition was a factor, but, after the experience of the past several years, few can fail to see that Prohibition must be relegated to the rear.

Of Hake and Wesslau's new work, "The Coming Individualism," the "Evening Post" says that it indicates that the coming individualism must be something very disagreeable, because the authors indulge in intemperate language and ill-considered assertions. It goes on to characterize the book as a "farrago of querulous protests, indiscriminate censure, and unsupported assertions," and is sure that it is calculated to exasperate the reader. Then it grudgingly admits that the authors, in spite of their ill manner, have reason on their side, and that their work may not be wholly unprofitable reading. We further learn that the authors attack the factory acts, and that with this the "Post" sympathizes. It agrees that the fanatical Socialistic faith in the efficacy and value of these acts is entirely irrational, and that, as a matter of fact, the improved conditions of labor would inevitably have come, if there had been no factory acts at all. We also learn that the authors are against the English banking laws and the restrictions imposed upon the liquor traffic. With regard to these subjects the "Post" delivers itself of the following truly Bunsbyish sentiments: "Nothing seems more unlikely than that the English should change either their system of dealing with the traffic in strong drink or their banking laws, but these writers are not daunted by such considerations; nor is it wholly vain to protest against the most inveterate abuses, for only in this way can they be prevented from increasing. While we may not be convinced that the abolition of the monopoly of the Bank of England is desirable, it is well to be reminded of the objections that may be fairly raised against it, and in this country we evidently need to consider the subject from every point of view. We might say the same of the drink traffic, but it must be confessed that the wisdom of the policy of loading this business with all manner of burdens is firmly established in the minds of most people." Coming from a professed apostle of individualism, this is very luminous and vigorous indeed.

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BENJ. R. TUCKER, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.

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"*In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel.*" — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

Mr. Brown on the Single Tax.

Professor Henry C. Adams has recently remarked that it is extremely difficult to deal with the Single Tax, because its propositions are incoherent and indefinite. The plan of taxing the full rental value of land is simple enough, but no two Single Taxers agree with regard to the reasons for this reform. If you attack and confute one Single Taxer's reasoning, the others triumphantly meet your criticism by repudiating the arguments of their champion, and inventing a number of new ones. A fatal facility for forgetting their own claims and assertions is also characteristic of most Single Taxers.

For instance: Every reader of Mr. George, and of Single-Tax literature generally, knows that it is a fundamental contention of the school that rent tends to absorb everything and to rise at the expense of profits. Whenever this claim is made at a Single-Tax gathering, it receives general and enthusiastic assent. Some time ago Professor Loomis, an able Single Taxer of Chicago, attempted to prove in a lecture that the entire profits which resulted from the progress of invention in the shoe industry were swallowed up by rent, and went neither to the manufacturers or to the workmen. The Single Tax Club went wild over this convincing, concrete illustration of the truth of their view. When, in my address before the club, I challenged this assumption, and showed that rent rises no faster than profits, and that the percentage of increase is nearly the same in industrial profits and city rents, the Single Taxers forgot "Progress and Poverty," forgot Professor Loomis and their own wild applause, and told me that I had been trying to burst an open door, and that Single Taxers were well aware, and always readily admitted, that rent increases in the same ratio as profits. The point, I was solemnly told, is not that rent absorbs profits, but that it rises at all! And great was the delight of the club at this exposure of my ignorant perversion of Single-Tax philosophy and economics!

Now, the Single Taxers are wont to boast that no school of economics has successfully met them. That is absolutely true; but for a different reason than that which they assign. They are so shifty, uncertain, and incoherent that one never knows where to find them. You cannot attack an enemy who dodges and runs away, yielding position after position without a fight. Let Single Taxers first come together, formulate their doctrines, and advance a series of definite economic and historical propositions in support of their practical plan. Then the thinking world will have an opportunity to test the scientific value of the Single Tax.

I do not intend to hold Mr. E. O. Brown responsible for the sins of his fellow Single Taxers, but I am sorry to find evidence in his recent letter in Liberty that he has not altogether escaped the infection alluded to. The tendency to "go back on" orthodox Single-Tax doctrine and advance novel and contradictory arguments may be traced all through his reply to my criticism.

In the first place, Mr. Brown does not correctly state Mr. Salter's point. In his criticism of the Single Tax as an economic reform, Mr. Salter freely admitted that labor would be benefited by a heavy tax on unused land held for speculative purposes; what he denied was the assertion that such a tax would "free" natural opportunities and give workmen "free" land. Now, Mr. Salter "omitted" nothing, and Mr. Brown supplied nothing material. He reminded Mr. Salter that the Single Tax would discourage speculation in land and help the workmen by compelling those holding land out of use either to improve it *or* to abandon it; but Mr. Salter had not overlooked that consideration at all. He dwelt upon the fact that under the Single Tax all land would be taxed up to the highest rental value, and that the laborer would have to pay for land. Taxed land is not free land, and a heavy tax does not open up natural opportunities, or allow "free" access to them. All through Single-Tax literature there is the recurrent refrain that labor needs free access to natural opportunities, and that in this free access alone lies the solution of the labor question; and Mr. Salter simply said that, *if* this be true, then the Single Tax is no remedy, for it certainly does not free land, and does not open up natural opportunities.

Mr. Brown says that I have cavalierly dismissed the cardinal proposition of "our whole school" that the destruction of speculation in land would solve the labor problem. I plead guilty to this impeachment. Such a statement cannot be considered seriously, however great the number of "able and highly rational men" who put it forward. There are plenty of able and highly rational men who know nothing of economic history, who are totally unacquainted with present economic conditions in the old world, and who make the most preposterous statements about industrial matters without any consciousness of absurdity. No one who knows what the labor question is would ever say that it can be solved by destroying land speculation.

Indeed Mr. Brown himself realizes this, for he does not claim that taxation of the full rental value of unused land would solve the labor question. He says that "it would be of very great advantage to all laborers," and that it is the greatest of all means at present feasible for the "amelioration of our distressing economic and social conditions." This is why I said that he reduces the Single Tax to a very insignificant affair,—insignificant as compared with what it is in "Progress and Poverty," for example. Mr. George asserts that he has "traced to their source social weakness and disease," and has "shown the remedy." He claims that his scheme "would remove want and the fear of want, give all classes leisure and comfort, independence, the decencies and refinements of life, and the opportunities of mental and moral development." In a word, with Mr. George the Single Tax is literally a panacea, while Mr. Brown says that it would be of great advantage to workmen. Isn't this considerable of a climbing down, reduction to insignificance? Of course it is by no means an insignificant affair to confer a great advantage upon workmen, and, if the Single Taxers had never made any greater claims, the controversy would have taken a totally different shape. But the true Single Taxers offered their scheme as a panacea for all social and economic ills, and not as a method of discouraging land speculation and indirectly aiding the laborer. Mr. Brown is not an orthodox Single Taxer, and he cannot speak for "our school" at all. "Our school" would protest against his moderation,—at least, if no opponents were around, and it was not necessary to make the admission for the sake of saving something from the wreck of the scheme.

I do not deny that the freeing of vacant land would indirectly benefit labor to some extent, but I deny that the benefit would be very great. Nothing prevents the unemployed and the poorly-paid wage-laborers in the United States from making a living from the land, except lack of capital. Whatever *a priori* philosophers might say, the testimony of all who know the facts is that there is plenty of land in the United States that can be had for the asking. Thousands of experienced farmers are abandoning their farms because they cannot make both ends meet, and the whole agricultural industry is in a state of extreme depression. It is simply idle to talk about a "land problem" in the United States or Canada, where the demand for settlers and farmers is so great that commissions are being appointed and bureaus established to attract immigration and advertise the advantages of the various localities. There is land for everybody who wants it; what there is a great scarcity of is capital. Maryland, Alabama, Georgia, Washington, and other States are begging for agricultural immigrants, and wage-workers are slow to respond because they have no capital and no fitness for agriculture. This being the situation, the talk about land speculation as the cause of poverty and idleness is moonshine. Only those who evolve theories out of their own inner consciousness can defy fact and experience so recklessly.

How is it with old-world countries? It requires still greater recklessness to assert that the poverty and misery *there* are due to speculation in land. Anybody who has read anything about the condition of English, Irish, and Scottish farmers knows that the land problem there is a rent problem. I repeat that there is no land *speculation* in the old-world countries

worth mentioning, although Mr. Bolton Hall, confounding "speculation" with "holding out of economic use," asserts the contrary. Land used as a game preserve is held out of proper economic use, but it is not held "speculatively." What has been the history of Irish land agitation and legislation? The efforts have been to reduce rents, to protect the tenants' improvements, to check the landlords' greed and extortion? In Ireland the tenants' holdings are so small that the landlords have found it impossible to improve them, while such improvements as the tenants have made have been confiscated by the landlords in the shape of rent. To say that speculation in land is the cause of Irish misery is to write one's self down—a Gilbert and Sullivan character. The situation in Scotland, France, Italy, and Germany is not much different. France, thanks to the revolution, is a country of peasant proprietors, and yet agriculture is depressed and poverty is very general. How would the Single Tax help the French farmer and laborer? The Single Tax is offered for all countries; it is applicable to none.

I would urge Mr. Brown and Mr. Hall to reread those pages of "Progress and Poverty" in which Mr. George accounts for the want and misery of Ireland. Not a word about land speculation, but a a great deal about rack-rents and confiscation of improvements. Ireland needs no methods of destroying land speculation, although she does need free land—something the Single Tax does *not* give.

Mr. Brown says that it is not necessary that the entire body of laborers should be given access to free land, and that, if but a small percentage of them found such access, wages would be raised to the natural limit. This may be granted, but the trouble is that not even a few would find *free* access to natural opportunities. Only that would be "free" under the scheme which was worthless and had no rental value at all, and it is clear that such "opportunities" would go, not to the laborers, but to present holders. Mr. Brown forgets that, since the method of freeing the unused land is a tax upon its rental value, land which had no rental value would not be subject to any tax, and hence would not be thrown open. On the other hand, land which is really valuable would remain inaccessible to the capital-less laborer.

But, says Mr. Brown, owners of unused land would improve their holdings and thus create a new demand for labor. Again Mr. Brown forgets that land cannot be improved without capital, and that, so long as usury in any form exists, no one will improve land unless there is the promise of a "fair return" in the capitalistic sense. Now, in these days of hard times and investors' famine, no prodding is necessary to induce people with capital to improve land wherever it is profitable to do so. Owners are not eager to "improve" their lands because real estate is depressed and there is no profit in that line of investment. On the other hand, when times are "good" and capital is active, the heavy tax on unused land would simply withdraw capital from other channels and throw just as many laborers out of employment as it would make room for. Capital does not lie idle in good times, and is very quick to discover opportunities and possibilities of increase. Indeed, this whole talk of Single Taxers about compelling owners to improve land rests on their fundamental misconception of the relation of capital to production and the influence of interest on wages and industry. Given the present financial and banking system, there is absolutely no way of compelling the improvement of land or the throwing of the same upon the market. Since the tax would have to be determined by competitive bids, the owners would retain their holdings by paying a slight amount, no one else being in a position to offer more, and the laborer being in no position to offer anything at all.

Of course I do not mean to deny that real freedom of all unoccupied and unused land would benefit labor, even in such countries as the United States and Canada, where there is still plenty of land for those who want it; but the way to free such land is to refuse to respect titles not based on occupancy and use. Mr. Brown did not go into the question of whether land speculation could be abolished by this simple and direct remedy, and I regret this fact very much. It is the most important question which land reformers who are also individualists are called upon to consider. Libertarians who advocate the governmental scheme of the Single Tax as a method of destroying speculation in land are absurdly inconsistent and false to their philosophy. It is natural for a true lover of liberty to adopt libertarian methods, and, if the simple and direct plan of refusing to recognize titles to unoccupied land can bring about the desired end, there is no sense in, no excuse for, deliberately rejecting liberty and resorting to the governmental Single Tax. Mr. Brown is in many respects an extreme individualist, and he must justify his abandonment of liberty in this case, or stand convicted of gross, gratuitous, unpardonable inconsistency. Mr. Brown vaguely says that it seems to him that the "Single Tax is the method best adapted to our circumstances and to the conditions of life around us at present for limiting possession of land to its use." Though a close student of the political situation, I fail to discover any basis of fact for this impression. Mr. Brown probably means that it is easier to get the Single Tax by legislation than occupancy and use. Perhaps; but he will get a number of other Populist and collectivist measures along with it, and the loss will more than offset the gain. To imagine that it is possible to get liberty in everything else and governmentalism in land tenure requires absolute disregard of the lessons of past and present politics.

Mr. Brown's allusion to "circumstances" and "conditions around us" moves me to ask him why he is so uncompromising in his attitude on the financial question. He insists on absolute freedom of banking and credit and note-issuing, and has no interest whatever in the palliatives advocated by governmentalists of his own school or any other school. Yet he knows that absolute financial freedom is but a remote possibility at present; circumstances and conditions are all against it. Why, then, should such circumstances and conditions cause him to advocate the Single Tax, if he is not prepared to maintain and prove that it is the best and soundest and most scientific solution of the land question everywhere and under any circumstances? It is one thing to advocate Single Tax as a compromise and departure from principle, and another thing to advocate it as the only true and permanent remedy. As a libertarian, it is incumbent upon Mr. Brown to consider the occupancy-and-use solution and satisfy himself that it would not abolish speculation. Until he does that, he cannot logically and consistently advocate the Single Tax.

One other point, and a very important one. Mr. Brown, by implication at least, states that he advocates the Single Tax simply as a method of discouraging land speculation, and limiting possession of land to its use. This means that the Single Tax would not be permanent, and would not be levied, even temporarily, on farmers and other owners who actually occupy and use their land. This, it is needless to say, is not orthodox Single-Tax doctrine at all. Single Taxers seek to appropriate *all* land values, tax all owners whose holdings have any rental value at all, and thus equalize the returns from land. They claim that rent belongs to the community, and that no holder can justly appropriate it. They intend to tax every holder, whether he uses his land or not, and to make the tax permanent. Mr. Brown's view is novel and heretical. It is not the view of "our school," and it is interesting to know whether Mr. Brown really means to commit himself to the position implied, if not plainly expressed, in his letter. Needless to say that this novel view is far less objectionable, both ethically and economically, than the orthodox proposition.

Concerning Mr. Hall's letter I may say something in next Liberty. V. Y.

Liberty and Communism.

My practice of "jumping on" people, which leads Mr. Robinson to begin his brief explanatory letter (see sixth page) with an exclamation, has generally proved very effective in clarification of thought and expression, and the present case offers no exception to the rule. In his review of Mr. Tandy's book Mr. Robinson plainly declared that "we should never forget that liberty is but a means to an end." Now, in response to my criticism of this, he gives us the very admirable, but certainly quite opposite, statement that "liberty is both a means and an end,—the only means and a great part of the end." This is precisely my view, and to bring out a declaration of it from Mr. Robinson is well worth a "jump" or two. In the very first editorial that appeared in Liberty, fifteen years ago, it was pointed out that this view of liberty as both means and end is one of the main things that differentiate Anarchism from other political and economic schools; so, when Mr. Robinson, by pronouncing liberty "but a means," declared it not an end, it was natural that I should be disinclined to let his statement pass unchallenged. I consider that, in leading him to correct himself, I have done him and our readers a service.

Having thus encouraged myself, I am going to jump again. Mr. Robinson remarks incidentally that he has no doubt that the Communists really want liberty, as they profess to. Why does he think so? Of what Communists does he speak? How are we to know what Communists believe, save as we find their beliefs put down in black and white by their

principal writers? What do these writers say?

Take John Most, for instance. He says that, after the revolution, if two men coöperate under an agreement that one shall pay the other wages, the arrangement will be terminated by force, even though it be perfectly voluntary. Does Mr. Robinson think that John Most believes in liberty?

Or take the Chicago men. It is well known to those who were familiar with them that they proposed to dispose of rebellious persons who might insist on retaining their private property by taking them to the first vacant lot and shooting them. Does Mr. Robinson think that the Chicago men believed in liberty?

Or take Kropotkine. He declares, in his "Words of a Rebel," that the next revolution will fail in its historic mission unless it achieves the complete expropriation of all by force. Does Mr. Robinson think that Kropotkine believes in Liberty?

Or take the "Firebrand." Its principal writer, J. H. Morris, declares in the issue of June 7 that "holders of private property are not Anarchists—they are invaders." Does Mr. Robinson regard the "Firebrand" as an organ of liberty?

Who are these Communists that believe in liberty? Where are they to be found? That nearly all of them say they believe in it I do not deny. But those of them who have even a half clear notion of how they propose to achieve and maintain Communism always betray somewhere a reliance on authority and a determination to use force upon persons whom Anarchists consider non-invasive; while those who betray nothing of this sort are generally persons whose notious are of so nebulous a character that they cannot be classified as Communistic or otherwise. Undoubtedly there are, here and there, individuals who would like to live with others on a common-property basis, but who do not propose to drag the rest of the world into their scheme against its will. But Communism is a school, with its organs and its propaganda and its orators and its leading writers; and it is these who are to be mainly considered when we undertake to ascertain what Communists believe. T.

Mr. Horr's Views of Land Tenure.

In considering the two letters of Mr. Alexander Horr in the last issue of Liberty, I notice at the outset that they betray a singular contradiction. In the first we are told that the occupancy-and-use theory of land tenure "has not risen to the dignity of respectable empiricism." In the second we are told that of the four systems of land tenure now advocated there are two which "deserve the most careful consideration," and that one of the two is the occupancy-and-use theory. The question arises: why does that which has not risen to the dignity of respectable empiricism deserve to be considered with care?

Mr. Horr complains of the indefiniteness with which the advocates of the occupancy-and-use theory explain it. My opinion is that the larger share of the indefiniteness regarding it that exists in his own mind is due to a failure on his part to weigh and understand what has been said in defence of the theory. In a recent conversation with me, Mr. Horr naïvely assumed the ownership by an Astor of the whole of Manhattan Island, and the renting of the same in parcels to tenants, as a possibility quite consistent with the occupancy-and-use theory and one which the theory's advocates would so regard. Such an assumption on his part showed beyond question that he has failed to consider the positions that have been taken in Liberty as to the nature of occupancy and use. These positions have been stated in English plain enough to be definitely grasped. If Mr. Horr had taken pains to understand them, he could not interpret the occupancy-and-use theory in a manner squarely contradictory of them. There will be no motive for Liberty to attempt a completer exposition of its doctrine for Mr. Horr's benefit, until he understands the perfectly definite things that Liberty has already said.

Agreeing to my claim that equal freedom is not a law, but simply a rule of social life which we find it expedient to follow, Mr. Horr asks me why, if it is expedient to enforce equal freedom in other things, it is not also expedient to enforce equal rights to the use of the earth. As appropriately might I ask him why it is not expedient to enforce equal rights to the use of brain power. Equal freedom as defined and advocated in Liberty covers only the control of self and the results of self-exertion. "Equal rights in other things" is a phrase of Mr. Horr's coinage. I uphold equal freedom, as I define it, because it secures individuality, the definition and encouragement of which are essential to social development and prosperity and to individual happiness. I oppose Mr. Horr's policy loosely described as "equal rights in other things" because it tends to obliterate individuality. The enforcement of equal rights to the use of the earth, for instance, by a single tax on land values means a confiscation of a portion of the individual's product, a denial of the liberty to control the results of self-exertion, and hence a trampling upon individuality. If an equal distribution or common ownership of wealth, with the accompanying destruction of individuality, is a good thing, then let us become Communists at once, and confiscate every excess, whether its source be land value, brain value, or some other value. If, on the other hand, the protection of the individual is the thing paramount and the main essential of happiness, then let us defend the equal liberty of individuals to control self and the results of self-exertion, and let other equalities take care of themselves.

An instance of the peculiar manner in which Mr. Horr interprets his opponent's utterances may be seen in his comments on Mr. Yarros's statement that, while voluntary taxation of economic rent might not be a good thing, "the use of force to bring it about would be extremely unwise." Mr. Horr thinks that this statement is "not quite clear." It is true that it is not quite exact. Mr. Yarros had better have said "the use of force to effect it," or, more simply still, "the enforcement of it," than "the use of force to bring it about." But even from the sentence as it stands it seems to me that no intelligent reader should have failed to extract the evident meaning that, though men might well agree to pay rent into a common treasury, no man should be forced to do so. Yet Mr. Horr takes it to mean that force should not be used to collect rent in special and abnormal cases. I do not see the slightest warrant for this extraordinary and senseless construction of Mr. Yarros's words.

Mr. Horr defends State collection of rent on the ground that, if equal rights to land be admitted, "all men have a right to collect rent from those who use better than free land, because each individual would collect such rent himself, if he had the power." Logic does not warrant the inference. I showed clearly, in my discussion with Miss Musson, that, even granting Single-Tax ethics, still State collection of every individual's share of rent, without delegation by each individual of his right to collect, cannot be advocated consistently by any individualist. The fact that an individual would collect the rent rightfully due him, if he had the power, does not warrant another man, or all other men, in proceeding unauthorized to collect this rent. There are some creditors who believe that the State should not collect debts. Would Mr. Horr claim that the State is entitled to collect the debts due these creditors, regardless of their wishes in the matter? Now, rent is nothing but a debt, under Single-Tax ethics. Consequently any parties who contract for the collection of their rents in common must see to it that they collect only their own shares of the total rent due. If they collect other people's shares, even the Single Taxer, if he be an individualist, is bound to consider them thieves.

All that Mr. Horr has to say about the difficulty of sustaining an occupancy-and-use system by jury decisions is based on silly and gratuitous assumptions. In the first place, it is pure assumption to say that juries will be recruited solely from tax-payers. No believer in the original form of jury trial as explained by Spooner ever advanced such a proposition. In the second place, it is pure assumption to say that, when taxation is voluntary, only landowners will pay taxes, because they alone benefit by the expenditure of the taxes. It is not true that they alone benefit. Every individual benefits whose life, liberty, and property is protected. In the third place, it is pure assumption to say that jurors do not, in the main, render verdicts in accordance with their own conceptions of equity and social living. A jury of thieves is quite as likely as a jury of honest men to convict a prisoner justly accused of theft. Now, no advocate of occupancy-and-use tenure of land believes that it can be put in force, until as a theory it has been as generally, or almost as generally, seen and accepted as is the prevailing theory of ordinary private property. But, when the theory has been thus accepted, jurors may be relied on, in the main, to render verdicts in accordance therewith, no matter what their status or situation in life. Were it not so, no society would be possible.

Mr. Horr finally defends the Single Tax, against the objection that under it the land occupant is at the mercy of the community, by claiming that "changes due to social growth which are just as inevitable as any other phenomena of nature must be submitted to." I suppose, then, that, because I must submit to the tornado that destroys my crop, I must also submit to the depredations of people who choose to settle in my vicinity and then rob me of a part of my crop by what they call a tax on

my land value. Well, of course I must, if my fellow-citizens all turn thieves,—that is, Single Taxers. Consequently I am trying to persuade them to be honest.

I have answered Mr. Horr at this length, because I invited him to write the letters, and promised to give them consideration. But I have really given them more importance than they deserve. Mr. Horr came to this office several times to debate the land question. As he is a sincere, intelligent, and enthusiastic young man, and as I observed some acuteness in his criticisms, and as I seriously object to protracted oral discussion of economic questions, wherein one is liable to make careless, inaccurate, and unguarded statements, I invited him to put his thoughts on paper for publication in Liberty. But in this transfer to paper all the acuteness has vanished. T.

Liberty has never "boomed" a man for office, but at this juncture it cannot avoid the reflection that, if the Democrats were to nominate and elect to the presidency Judge Samuel P. McConnell, one of the Illinois delegates-at-large to the Democratic national convention, the country would have the most thoroughly libertarian president that ever occupied the White House. Yet it would be a pity to smirch so clean, honorable, and high-minded a man by placing him in the presidential chair.

At the recent convention of the British coöperative societies the plan of organizing agriculture on a coöperative basis was discussed to some extent. The "rent" difficulty was suggested, but the objection was met by the remark that "there were within thirty miles of St. Paul's Cathedral twenty thousand acres of land which could be had for nothing." The Single Taxers should institute an investigation at once, or at least right after "capturing Delaware." If the fact is as stated, their *a priori* doctrine will come into violent collision with reality, with results that may prove unfortunate for the doctrine. Twenty thousand acres free, and no rush of laborers to take advantage of the opportunity! The Single Tax has no possible explanation for such a situation. But there is one, notwithstanding.

There is not a single Democratic paper which has the intelligence or the courage to declare for free banking. All solemnly repudiate the charge that they mean to reduce the amount of government regulation or give any encouragement to wild-catism. The natural inference would seem to be that the regulations and inspections are necessary and valuable. But the Chicago "Chronicle" states it as an absolute fact that in Illinois not a single dishonest banker has ever been punished for his rascality. Scores of bankers have robbed their depositors, and not one has been convicted and sent to prison. The "Chronicle," in view of this, pertinently asks "what sense there is in railroading to the penitentiary poor devils whose petty thefts are nothing but annoyances." A more pertinent question is what sense there is in keeping up the pretence that government regulation prevents wildcating and protects the public, and in continuing to oppose the freedom of the people to open any kind of bank they choose or to deal with any bankers they confide in. If liberty is not better than restriction, it is at least no worse.

Hoity Toity! Anarchy in Public Schools!

At a public oratorical contest between pupils of the Minneapolis high school held last April a boy named W. Edward J. Gratz gave an address in defence of Anarchy, which was unanimously decided, by the three judges presiding, to be the most thoughtful of the addresses which the occasion called forth. It has been printed on a single sheet under the title, "Anarchy in America," but how copies may be obtained, or at what price, I do not know. On the whole, this boy's production is much superior in point of accuracy to many discussions of the subject that have appeared from the pens of economists, clergymen, and editors. Its closing paragraphs appear below:

> That Anarchy is no impracticable dream we can see by various instances in our own country. We are told by Mr. Bryce that in a district of Western New York and Ohio people have deliberately concluded that it is cheaper and simpler to take the law into their own hands, on those occasions when law is needed, than to be at the trouble of forming and paying a municipal force.
>
> People have lived and died without law in the extreme western parts of our country before civilization was introduced, and, it is often thought, much more happily than now.
>
> This all tends to show that government is not absolutely necessary for the protection of life and property.
>
> Anarchy desires to bring about peace and happiness without any government but that of the individual by himself; absolute freedom of thought and action; a condition of society where education and self-control rule the individual; where all have full liberty to enjoy life and cultivate their abilities.
>
> "An ideal, far in advance of practicality though it may be," says Spencer "is always needful for right guidance." Here is such an ideal not entirely impracticable. Let us give it the credit it deserves, and let us beware lest, in decrying Anarchy as a foreign product, hostile to the spirit of our institutions, we are ourselves guilty of unjustly hampering the citizen in things which affect his life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.

Anarchist Letter-Writing Corps.

The Secretary wants every reader of Liberty to send in his name for enrolment. Those who do so thereby pledge themselves to write, when possible, a letter every fortnight, on Anarchism or kindred subjects, to the "target" assigned in Liberty for that fortnight, and to notify the secretary promptly in case of any failure to write to a target (which it is hoped will not often occur), or in case of temporary or permanent withdrawal from the work of the Corps. All, whether members or not, are asked to lose no opportunity of informing the secretary of suitable targets. Address, STEPHEN T. BYINGTON, East Hardwick, Vt.

The "Farmers' Voice" prints two letters rebuking the editor for the intolerance displayed in his comments on W. B.'s letter, one of them from a Corps member. It also refers to the subject in the editorial columns, saying:

> The "docile" Anarchist, from New England to San Francisco, has been aroused by some remarks we recently made in our columns concerning Anarchy. In another column we publish two communications, one a veritable "roast," from the pens of subscribers. . . . It is a conspicuous feature of the management of this paper to throw its columns wide open to our subscribers. It is their paper. But most of the letters that we have received—some of them abusive—in reply to what we said on Anarchy have come from those who are not subscribers. We desire it to be distinctly understood that it is not a slop-bucket for the reception of all the bile of the universe. If it is not worth seventy-five cents a year to maul an editor in his own paper, the sweet privilege will not be enjoyed. Send in your subscription, and then flay us. That is a good deal better offer for subscribers than chromos and plated spoons.

Yet the paper has lately, within my knowledge, published short Anarchist letters from at least three members and friends of the Corps who are not subscribers; so we needn't complain. As to the "abusive" letters, I have said already in this column that I think them bad policy. But I don't object to everything that some people can find an excuse for calling abusive. The letter from a Corps member, which the "Farmers' Voice" publishes under the heading "Emphatic, If Not Courteous," is an instance of one about on the margin. The phrases which occasioned that head-line were such as these:

> Your reply to "An Advocate of Anarchy," printed in a recent issue of your paper, exposes your utter ignorance of the question you are attempting to discuss. . . . Of course you are not so ignorant as not to have heard of Herbert Spencer. . . . I am sending you a copy of Liberty, the principal organ of American Anarchists. Please look it over, and then go and make such a fool of yourself as to advise your 42,000 subscribers that . . .

Now, I should personally have preferred to use less rough language. Yet I cannot deny that these harsh words are just, and that such are sometimes useful in waking up a man who will not let anything less sharp get through his skin; so that I really do not know—and do not think that any one can know with certainty—whether the choice of such language was the best policy in this case or not. It is worth remembering, by the way, that Anarchist writing is likely to be called abusive, when the same words in another cause would not.

A member of the Corps writes, referring to a recent target:

> Mr. Byington, do you really think there is any hope of converting a D. D.? That sermon of his was as common-place as it well could be. If you wanted to tackle every fool that uses the word "liberty" in that sense, you would have no difficulty in finding targets.

I reply, first, that D. D.'s are of all sorts. Second, that we need not hope to convert a man in order to expect good fruit. If we can only induce him to make attacks on our real position instead of on misconceptions of it, he will thereby spread the knowledge of what Anarchism means, which is good work. Third, that I didn't consider this particular D. D. an especially good target myself, but one worth sending a section's letters to when we had no better. Those who know where to find better targets than I publish will confer a great favor by sending them to me. Of course, I am now and then crowded with a greater number of first-class targets than I can use with reasonable promptness; but I can stand such embarrassments, and even wish I was in that condition all the time.

If our letters merely have the effect of making Anarchism and Anarchists a more frequent and prominent feature in Dr. Lorimer's talk, we shall thereby have done something to increase the amount of interest in the subject among his hearers. Just so those who wrote to the "Farmers' Voice," though their letters were not printed, yet count for something when the editor merely reports their existence in his editorial. This report itself brings before his 42,000 subscribers the fact that there are Anarchist writers enough so that those of them who are interested in the "Farmers' Voice" send that paper a shower of letters when it attacks their principle. (Our San Francisco member, who is afraid his letters will never be printed, will notice that he comes in here to help the editor make a strong statement of how wide-spread his Anarchist correspondents are.) The words I have quoted from that editorial are alone enough to make every reader realize that Anarchism is a living, working movement in America to-day.

You can't build up a great soap trade by simply painting the name of your soap on every fence; but, if you are at the same time pushing your soap in other ways, to have it painted on every fence is a great help.

Target, section A.—Mrs. C. B. Colby, "Woman's Tribune," 1,325 Tenth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C. Show that Anarchistic equality is the only form of political right from which woman can expect satisfactory results.

Section B.—"Farmers' Tribune," 513 Mulberry St., Des Moines, Ia., a prominent Populist organ. Show why perfect liberty is the only remedy for the evils of which Populists complain, and what perfect liberty would be. STEPHEN T. BYINGTON.

Liberty and Equality.

My dear Tucker:

How you do jump on a fellow! What I meant to say was that as perfect a society as possible, with the material comforts and immaterial joys that accompany it, summed up in the word fraternity, was ultimately what I wanted.

I tried to point out that anything like a perfect social condition implied substantially equal advantages to all of its members, and practically complete social equality,—that is to say, that the man who for any reason had less of material wealth would not therefore be either despised or dominated by him who had more. Material equality may not be absolutely attainable; social equality is absolutely.

Now, this approximately perfect society naturally includes liberty. Even the Communists will face you down that they, too, want liberty. And I have no doubt that they do. So that liberty is both a means and also an end,—the only means and a great part of the end.

What I am after is society. The Communists say, and I say, that society cannot be without equality. But they say that free competition cannot bring equality; while I urge that it can, yes, must, and, when they understand that this is possible, none will be quicker than they to ask for liberty only.

John Beverley Robinson.

As in France.

[Octave Mirbeau in Le Journal.]

The other evening we were talking of the little manifestations of students in Belgium over the proposed educational law.* According to him who told us of the various episodes, the spectacle was a very imposing one, and the government would be forced to reflect and perhaps—who knows?—retreat. At Ghent especially the character of the manifestations was admirable. Bands of students went through the streets, parading a flag bearing this heroic inscription: "Freethinkers, arise! Liberty of conscience is threatened!" And on another flag was to be read the motto: "We wish to be instructed, not cretinized." Good children!

And, as the narrator piled up moving details of these fine days and waxed enthusiastic over the noble claims of the Belgian students, I, by an association of ideas whose thread needs no explanation, bethought me of the biting and just satire which Louis Veuillot, in "Les Odeurs de Paris," devotes to Henry Mürger, to the poverty of his literature, to the debasing disorder of his life; and I recalled the following anecdote, with which it concludes.

Mürger was dying. Notified by the neighbors, a priest presented himself at the residence of the singer of Musette, asking to receive his confession. Mürger, who had heard, tried to rise up on his death-bed, and, with a voice strengthened by this last impulse of his theatrical vanity, he said to the friends who were weeping at his bed-side: "Tell him that I have read Voltaire!"

And Veuillot added sadly: "Poor little one, you had read only M. About!"

A charming Belgian poet, who was with us, interrupted the reflections into which these students' pranks had already led me, and this is what he said:

"Ghent, with us, is famous for its queer outbreaks. You remember, perhaps, those which took place in Belgium three years ago. The cause was really a little comical. The Belgian people were clamoring for universal suffrage. They too wanted to be sovereigns, to dictate their wills, to speak as masters. The idea had occurred to them suddenly, for some unknown reason. They already had a constitutional king, and had discovered, no doubt, that he did not suffice for their happiness. They wanted other kings in civilian's clothes, and they wanted to choose them themselves. Certainly, being gentle lambs, they did not refuse to be shorn and eaten daily; on the contrary, they demanded to be shorn and eaten to a greater extent than ever, and, above all, by people of their acquaintance, specially and solemnly entrusted by them with this duty. To obtain this wonderful privilege of being led to the governmental slaughter-houses by butchers popularly invested and democratically consecrated, the good Belgian *prolétaires* attempted a revolution. The people descended into the streets with arms in their hands, and indulged in the customary vociferations The *bourgeois*, protected by the troops, found amusement in these spectacles, which they knew to be harmless.

"At Ghent things seemed, for some days, to take a tragic turn. Cries, barricades, bloody affrays, pistol shots, cavalry charges, volleys of musketry,—nothing was lacking to complete the festivities, not even corpses. These skirmishes threatening to degenerate into real civil war, the civil guard was called out. I belonged to it, and had to present myself, under the flag of order, among the defenders of society. In my company there were only two genuine *bourgeois*,—a painter-friend of mine and myself. The rest were workmen, minor employees, humble clerks,—poor, thin creatures whom life treats avariciously; all, or almost all, were in complete sympathy with the rioters. In the ranks they discussed with each other in low tones, and the phrase 'universal suffrage' was continually on their lips. Then they faithfully promised each other that, if ordered to fire on the people, they would fire in the air.

"'They are right,' said one. 'They are fighting for our happiness.'

"'Better than that!' declared another; 'for our sovereignty. Our happiness is nothing. It is to be sovereigns that we are struggling to-day.'

"'Yes, yes, we all want to be sovereigns, as in France.'

"'To impose our will, as in France.'

"'To dictate our laws, as in France.'

"'Patience! A few days more, and we shall be in control of everything, as in France.'

"Another said:

"'They may give what orders they like; I will not fire. In the first place, because that does not meet my ideas; then, because my brother is with those who are fighting for our sovereignty. I would have fought myself; but I have a wife and two children.'

"'So would I; I would have fought. But my employer, who is not for the people,—who does not wish the people to be sovereign,—would have discharged me, and I should have been unable to get work.'

"'When we shall have universal suffrage, and when we shall be sovereigns, and when we shall be masters, it will be our turn to discharge the employers. We will do nothing, and we will eat all the time, because with universal suffrage' . . .

"This phrase 'universal suffrage' opened to all of them magnificent dreams and wonderful paradises, in which they saw tables abundantly provided with appetizing viands and joyous beverages; baskings in the sunshine, delights of all sorts. And their eyes dilated with these visions.

"A little man who so far had said nothing suddenly began to repeat, casting quick and threatening looks here and there about him:

"'When we shall have universal suffrage, I know very well for whom I shall vote.'

"'For whom will you vote?'

"'For some one.'

"These poor devils really filled me with pity. I was distressed, and a little irritated also, to see them the victims of illusions so gross. Addressing my neighbor, the little man, I said:

"'I shall not fire, either, because it is a crime to kill a man. But it is madness in the people to fight for such an object. One fights for bread, for comfort, for liberty. One fights because one is too poor, while others are too rich. But fight to gain an illusory right like universal suffrage? Fight for that lie, for that servitude, for that corruption? Don't you know, then, what universal suffrage is? You talk of France. Why, they are dying of that in France.'

"My neighbor shrugged his shoulders, and, with a look of contemptuous hatred, answered:

"'Say what you will. I do not listen to you. I know who you are. And you are not for the people.'

"'If you know who I am,' I answered, 'you know that I am your friend, the friend of all who are not happy. I would fight to get for you a little of that happiness which you are going to ask—of whom? Do you know?'

"'Yes, yes,' rejoined my neighbor. 'Go on, go on! Say what you will. I do not listen to you.'

"Grinding his teeth, he added:

"'You would like me to vote for you? Ha! ha! ha! I am not a fool. I will not vote for you. I know very well for whom I will vote. And, when I shall have voted for the man whom I know, we shall be masters, we shall be sovereigns. Yes, yes, extraordinary things will happen then. I know what I say. And you, you do not say what you know.'

"I said no more. There was nothing more to say.

"'At least,' thought I, 'they will not fire. We shall not have the shame of bloodshed upon us.'

"Our captain walked up and down the line, anxious, nervous, intently listening to the still distant tumult of the riot. From time to time horsemen crossed the square at a gallop. The shops were closed; pale *bourgeois* were hurrying into their houses, out of breath.

"Gradually the roar of the populace came nearer; the cries, the shouts, the calls, grew more distinct. Two shots rang out, like two cracks of a whip in a quarrel of coachmen. The captain turned toward us. He was a local dealer in neckwear, with a round, pink face, a big belly, and very soft eyes.

"'Boys,' he said to us, 'the crisis is near. They will be here in a few minutes, and I shall be obliged, after commanding them to disperse, to give the order to fire. For I know them; they are crazed, and will not listen to me. It is very unpleasant! To fire on one's townsmen, on the people that one knows,—that is not merry work. On the other hand, the law must be enforced. It is very unpleasant! If they had only quietly set forth their grievances! The king is a worthy man, his ministers are worthy people. And these men in the street, too, are worthy people. They would have come to some agreement, good or bad. But things are as they are. Duty first of all! It is very unpleasant! But I think that we must do as little harm as possible. So listen carefully. When I give the order to fire, the first rank will not fire. Only the second rank will fire. And it is not necessary even that the whole of the second rank should fire. In fact, we need only frighten them. Three or four dead, three or four wounded,—that will not be a very serious matter, and will be enough perhaps to stop those fellows. Come now, boys, you in the second rank, attention! Are there four men among you who are thoroughly determined to fire on the crowd, when I give the word? Are there four, simply? Answer!'

"And to my astonishment, from the right of the rank to the left, I heard leap from lip to lip this word:

"'I! . . I! . . . I! . . . I! . . . I!' . . .

"We were fifty men in that rank, and only two of the fifty kept their mouths shut. Two only were coldly resolved to fire in the air, when the death-order should come. And these two men were the two *bourgeois* of the company,—my painter-friend and myself."

"Poor little ones!" thought I, when the poet had finished his story. "They, too, perhaps, had read only the About of Belgium."

* This article was written many months ago, and the reference here is to events that were then occurring in Belgium.

A Convert from Communism.

Mr. E. H. Fulton, of Columbus Junction, Iowa, one of the principal publishers of Communistic literature in the United States, announces in the "Firebrand" his conversion from Communism to Anarchism. I have been looking for something of this sort to happen, since Mr. Fulton sent to me some months ago for a number of Liberty's pamphlets. His interesting statement of the reasons that induced his change of view I reprint below from the "Firebrand."

Before I became an Anarchist I was a State Socialist. While Communism had its attractions for me, as it naturally would for one who had previously held collectivist views, there were nevertheless some things in Communism of which I had grave doubts of being reconcilable with Anarchy or liberty. As I confounded Individualism with the so-called individualism of to-day, as taught in the University of Chicago, I could not consider it seriously for an instant; hence I took greedily to the many features of Communism which I did like, and swallowed the various points I did not like in a lump. The statement of Comrade Owen in the "Firebrand" some time ago that he found himself

gradually slipping away from Communism kept me from declaring myself in very positive tones as being a Communist. Comrade Holmes, in writing to me, made it pretty plain that Communism, rightly understood, was not incompatible with Individualism, nor altruism with selfishness. In his book, "Bases of Anarchy," he even shows that groups, as groups, might be in relation to one another as individual to individual. J. H. M., in a recent number of the "Firebrand," holds that communes would be composed of agreeable natures, to the exclusion of the seriously objectionable. Once the independence of a group were recognized that embraces less than the whole society, there can logically be no limit to its size; groups may become merely a proper family or a single person, save in the latter instance the word group would be improper, as it indicates more than one. This idea expressed by J. H. M. is in harmony with that of Comrade Holmes. But I am of the opinion that Individualism is the proper word, as the communes are based on the mutual agreement of individuals. Communism is possible under Individualism, but under Communism Individualism would be out of place. It would be, I think, rather awkward to say: "Society is communistic, notwithstanding many are commercialists and holders of the wealth of their creation or fair accumulation." More proper to say: "Individualism is the keynote of our society; there are many individuals, however, who live in communes and hold all property in common." The same may be said of Altruism. If Altruism is desirable, it is synonymous with real selfishness—of selfishness wisely pursued. I have concluded that "regard for others" carried to excess is a foolish idea, and that selfishness is the proper word. When abused, selfishness is greed, and generally reflects against self. When the idea of Altruism is abused,—that is, when it ceases to be inspired by selfish notions,—it is ridiculously silly, a denial of life itself.

Dr. Giovanni Rossi, as quoted in No. 9 of the "Firebrand," says that, since the experiment at Cæcilia, he is no less an Anarchist, but not quite the same Communist.

I see in Liberty occasionally a note by some one referring to erstwhile Communistic views; seeing what seemed to me to be the drift of opinion, I secured several dollars' worth of the literature of philosophical Anarchism and find that, while it does not offer flat equality in property, it would bring us so near to it that the evils of excessive riches and dire want would be removed the same as in Communism pure and simple. In fact, the true *laissez-faire* will answer every point (not at once, but a few years after its introduction) that led me to favor Communism. It is evidently the logical step to take next, and, as it will permit of Communism by those who desire so to live, as long as they like it, and as it is so much easier to convert the people to it than to Communism, I shall advocate it.

An equitable distribution of wealth seems to me better than an equal distribution, and in Individualism can this distribution best be subserved.

The broad fraternity and all-embracing humanity I once thought Anarchist-Communism to mean has been narrowed down by contemporary Communistic writers, and seems to grow narrower and narrower in each succeeding exposition. I cannot follow it in its slow course, but at once jump to the finale, and declare for Individualism.

The Price of Government.

[Albert Tarn in Newcastle Chronicle.]

I am told that in Alnwick market potatoes are at present 2s. 2d. for 10 stone. There is not the slightest harm in prices being as low as this, provided that the market for all commodities is equally free, and that all payments for services, whether "public" or private, are made by free contract in the open market. Unfortunately, however, this is not the case, and to the extent that it is not do we suffer discomfort and worry when prices continually fall. There are certain considerable payments which we all have to make without any free and open contract in the matter at all, and I want to call your readers' attention to the evils which incessantly result from our being constantly compelled to make such payments. You see, if I am free in making my contracts, then, if A charges me too much, I can patronize B, who charges me less, or go without the commodity or service, if I choose; but, when some body makes an arbitrary demand upon me to pay so much, and then certain public servants are paid out of the money so obtained, there is no chance of beating down prices or of dispensing with the services. If, therefore, vast institutions are based upon this false principle, collecting their hundreds of millions a year, and getting every one of us, whether we will or no, burdened with vast debts, very serious evils indeed are sure to follow, if market prices are constantly falling, or in other words, if the monetary unit is constantly increasing in value.

To make my meaning quite clear, let any of your readers reflect upon the changes which have taken place during the past quarter of a century in the prices of wheat and potatoes on the one hand, and of government on the other. They will observe that, whereas the prices of the former necessaries of life have been reduced by the best part of fifty per cent., no change for the better has taken place in the price of government. It is true that the cost of "national" government may not have increased in proportion to the wealth production of the country; but we know that a very considerable burden has been added in the form of "local rates and debts." The prices of most necessary commodities have fallen from year to year, but the price of government has steadily increased. The idea of the politicians seems to be that they must go on raising the same amount of money expressed in terms of the pound sterling from year to year, without ever giving a moment's reflection to the question whether the pound sterling has always the same value. Poor duffers! fancy their making such an omission in their calculations! Why, £100,000,000 of to-day is actually worth nearly £200,000,000 of the money of twenty-five years ago! This is just the sort of iniquitous stupidity that necessarily results when institutions are supported by forcible confiscations of money. All natural fluctuations of the market—all the varying conditions of trade—are left entirely out of sight, and the demands are made in perfectly arbitrary fashion. Nor is it probable that any reform can be effected, short of refusal to pay taxes, until national bankruptcy and ruin ensues. The politicians are, above all men, the persons who act in entire blindness, merely obeying certain impulses and passions in their desire for fame and popularity.

The inherent objection to people being paid out of money levied by force is so clear that we ought, one and all, to make up our minds on the matter, and make the termination of compulsory taxation the one article of our political faith. We should not allow any man to be so paid, even for the most philanthropic purpose, not even for the purpose of saving our souls from everlasting perdition. Even endowments are a far lesser evil than these institutions maintained by compulsory and arbitrary levies. There are plenty of useless institutions that are endowed; but, when prices fall, and rents are reduced by competition, the income of such institutions falls likewise; but your governments go on raising the same or an increasing amount from year to year. It is, in fact, just this rigidness and arbitrariness of government levies that constitute the greatest objection to the land nationalization from an economic point of view.

State monopolies have just the same inherent objections as compared with private enterprises; their charges are rigid and arbitrary.

An institution whose revenue does not vary with the general fluctuations of the market or with the total demand for its services, is sure to become at times a serious danger and an intolerable burden. Individuality is crushed out by it, and every one engaged in industry must find his path rendered difficult, his worries increased, and his efforts to attain success frustrated, without being able to see clearly the foe with whom he is constantly battling. We must all bear in mind that we are not free men, but "subjects," and, whilst this is the case, we cannot always blame those whose efforts in life are not crowned with success. The one political ideal that seems to me to be worth striving after is the liberation of every man and woman from the control of others in regard to all acts which do not constitute a breach of the peace, and the recognition of their right, when they can support themselves by their own industry, to spend every farthing of their money as they please.

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The most valuable knowledge an advertiser can possess about the papers where he spends his money is a positive knowledge of their circulations. There are other points to consider, but the most important of all is *circulation.*

To make a reasonable profit on your advertising you ought to secure the lowest rates and any other advantage a paper can offer; and you can do this only by being positively posted. There's no profit in circulation guesses. Guessing is what "eats up" an advertiser's profit and makes him think advertising doesn't pay. If you are sure of circulations, your advertising is a plain science; if you are guessing about them, its a gamble. You risk your money unless you know for certain.

One sure guarantee of a paper's circulation is worth more to an advertiser than a whole book full of guesses and "claims" and bluffs. That is why Rowell's

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is preferred to all others by the shrewdest advertisers in the world. It contains, beside everything valuable which others contain, a special list of nearly five thousand guaranteed circulation ratings found in no other directory.

It is the only directory whose ratings are backed by a solid cash guarantee.
The only one whose publishers pay one hundred dollars forfeit for every detected circulation lie indorsed in its pages.
The only one which always gives the advertiser the benefit of the doubt.
The only one which draws a sharp distinction between meaningless, irresponsible "claims," and definite signed statements.

It gives the exact circulation figures of every paper in the U. S. and Canada whose publisher will state these figures under his own signature. The publishers of the Directory guarantee the correctness of this statement by paying a forfeit of $100. in every case where the statement is proven false. They have paid $2,400 for 24 circulation lies within the last seven years. They also pay $100. for every erroneous rating due to their own neglect. There have been only two claims for this to date; both were typographical errors.

Its ratings have never been influenced by partiality or any motive of business advantage. To be correctly rated doesn't cost any publisher anything. He only needs to tell the truth and sign it.

If any publisher declines to make a definite statement, the publishers of the Directory rate his paper according to the most reliable information accessible, and judgment based upon an experience of 28 years, during which time this Directory has been published by Mr. Geo. P. Rowell, one of the most experienced advertisers in America. Through a publisher's own neglect his paper may receive a lower rating than he claims, but no paper receives a higher rating than it is thought by the publishers of the Directory to deserve. That is why great advertisers, and honest enterprising publishers swear by it while dishonest and indifferent ones swear at it.

An advertiser who spends a hundred dollars a year, by possessing a copy of this Directory, will probably save more than the price of the book on a year's advertising. He may save it on one small contract. Even about the papers in your own town you will probably learn exact facts that you never knew before.

It gives the names of all Newspapers and other Periodicals in the United States and Canada.
It gives the Politics, Religion, Class, Nationality, Days of Issue, Editor's Name, Publisher's Name, Size of the Paper, Subscription Price, Date of Establishment and Circulation.
It gives a separate list of all papers in each County, arranged by States; a separate list of all papers with over five thousand circulation, a complete list of all Sunday newspapers, a list of all Class Publications (Religious, Agricultural, Medical, Trade, in Foreign Languages, etc.), with a complete index to each class.
It gives a brief description of each place in which newspapers are published, population, railroads, local industries, name of county, etc., etc. It also contains many valuable tables and classifications, most conveniently arranged.

The Greatest Advertisers in the World.



Dr. Pierce's Family Medicines.

"The American Newspaper Directory is the most useful publication of its kind, and I refer to it in my business almost daily."

R. V. Pierce, M.D.

Pyles Pearline.

"We find Rowell's American Newspaper Directory a very great help in the laying out of advertising. We always use it and one other for circulation information, etc.

J. Pyle & Sons.

Mellin's Food.

"Mr. LeFetra of the Royal Baking Powder Company has endorsed your book so strongly by showing us that he uses it himself constantly for reference, that we want to have one of our own. Please send by express one copy at lowest price."

DOLIBER-GOODALE CO.,
Francis A. Wilson,
Manager of Advertising.

"Hoods' Sarsaparilla."

"We use as guides to prepare our advertising the lists published by Rowell, Ayer, and Dauchy. We believe that Rowell & Co. make an effort to secure reliable information, and are doing as well as anyone could under the present conditions."

C. I. Hood & Co.

Van Houten's Cocoa.

"After a careful examination of the American Newspaper Directory we are unable to make any suggestions which would enhance its value. We are of the opinion that the book is now as complete as it could be."

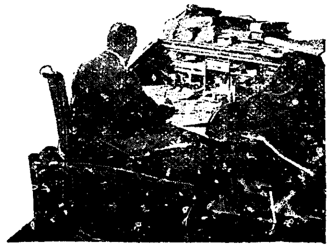
C. J. VAN HOUTEN & ZOON.

Jones, of Binghamton.

"He pays the freight."

"I have long been of the opinion that the American Newspaper Directory is the most reliable work of its kind. I do not think that the form or method could be improved upon.

EDWARD F. JONES.



Royal Baking Powder.

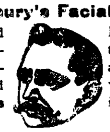
Mr. LeFetra, Advertising Manager, says:—

"When I wish to lay out a special line of advertising, I take down a copy of my Rowell (which you see I have here re-bound in calf and indexed for immediate reference), and check off the towns I want to cover and the papers that I think will do the work best."

His basis of figuring any particular medium is the circulation, although the other points are given due weight.

The gazetteer information in Rowell's was specially appreciated by him, and the general characteristics of a town, its population, its chief industries, its relative position in the State, etc., were exceedingly useful.

Woodbury's Facial Soap.



"We have used Rowell's American Newspaper Directory for about seven years. It is invaluable in our advertising department, and we consider it as good a directory as it is possible to produce."

John H. Woodbury

S. C. Beckwith.

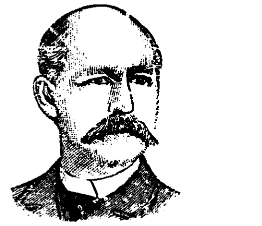
The most successful of the New York special agents, says:

"I see the American Newspaper Directory wherever I go. Prominent advertisers are constantly consulting it. When I approach an advertiser for a paper that I represent, the first thing he does is to spring 'Rowell' on me. He looks at the rating the Directory gives and then he is ready to listen to me, but not until then. This book has practically obliterated the idea that a newspaper directory is a blackmailing affair. It treats friends and foes all alike; and every publisher may have his circulation stated just as it is if he knows and will tell."

Humphrey's Specifics.

H. B. Harding, Esq., of the Humphrey's Homœopathic Medicine Company, says:

"I believe the information contained in the American Newspaper Directory is necessary to advertisers. I am persuaded that Rowell & Co. are not influenced in the slightest degree by personal considerations in the ratings accorded to papers. I am convinced that the reward offered for evidence of untruthful reports is sufficient guarantee of their correctness. When a publisher solicits my business, I invariably consult the Directory."



"Douglass's $3 Shoe."

"The Eastman Seed Company asked our advice as to the best newspaper directory, and we took pleasure in recommending the use of the American Newspaper Directory, which is the one used most by us."

Frank L. Erskine,
Advertising Manager.

Columbia Bicycles.

"The American Newspaper Directory is in constant use in our Advertising Department in placing the advertising of Columbia Bicycles."

Albert A. Pope

"The Yellow Fellow" Bicycle.

"We regard the American Newspaper Directory as the most reliable index of circulations published, and it is our custom to consider its ratings as about as nearly exact as it is possible to judge such a difficult matter.

F. C. STEARNS & CO.,

L. G. Quackenbush
Advertising Manager.

Ayer's Sarsaparilla.

"We have frequent recourse to the American Newspaper Directory in the selection of mediums for our advertising, and consider that ratings guaranteed by a forfeit of $100 invite reliance in a greater degree than other ratings.

J. C. Ayer Co.

Chas. Austin Bates.

"To illustrate the difference in directories, I know of one paper that is rated in Ayer's Directory at, I think, 40,000; in Lord & Thomas' at about the same figure, and in Dauchy's at either 40,000 or 50,000. Now, I know, as a matter of fact, that the total edition of this paper is inside 6,500 copies per week. It could not secure an inflated rating in the American Newspaper Directory without making a detailed statement over the signature of the business manager or proprietor. This it will not do. This is the only directory that makes any really intelligent, honest effort to get at the exact circulation of newspapers."

The 1896 edition is just out, and will be sent by mail, carriage paid, on receipt of price, five dollars. Address,

GEORGE P. ROWELL & CO., Publishers,
10 Spruce Street, New York.